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SUBJECT: GOB DISPUTES U/S BURNS' STATEMENTS ON BELARUSIAN
SUPPORT FOR IRAN

Classified By: Charge Jonathan Moore for reason 1.4 (d).

11. (C) On August 28, Director of the MFA's North America office Sergey Sergeyev, accompanied by Counselor Andrey Rzheuskiy, presented to Charge and Acting Pol/Econ Chief the GOB's official reaction to Under Secretary Burns' characterization during a August21 Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty interview of Belarus as part of a "gang of four" states supporting Iran in international fora. Sergeyev said Burns' statements "do not reflect reality" and called the Under Secretary's tone insulting. Sergeyev argued that Belarus, as a country that renounced nuclear weapons, supported all non-proliferation treaties. Moreover, Belarus acts in accordance with UNSCRs 1737 and 1747 and has documented its compliance to the UN, according to Sergeyev. Sergeyev also repeated the GOB's desire to join the Zangger Committee.

12. (C) Charge dismissed Sergeyev's criticism, noting the troubling nature of Belarusian cooperation with and support for Iran, including a growing number of bilateral visits and projects. Charge also commented that it was strange to see a country that had suffered so terribly from the Holocaust closely associating itself with a foreign leader who denied that the Holocaust had occurred. Sergeyev made no comment, and quickly turned the meeting to other topics.
Moore